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RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI PRIORITY 0805
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SUBJECT: JUI-F OFFICIALS ON GWOT

REF: ISLAMABAD 1060

CLASSIFIED BY: Michael Spangler, Principal Officer, Amconsul
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REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

11. (SBU) At a 1/24 meeting with South Waziristan tribal elders and parliamentarians, Opposition leader and JUI-F President Maulana Fazlur Rehman stressed his party advocated political, not armed struggle to achieve its goals. Following a lengthy closed-door session, he announced the group agreed to seek the cooperation of all tribal people in denying "safe haven to foreign fighters." Rehman demanded that foreigners in the tribal areas immediately register with the GOP or depart Pakistan. The group also called on the GOP not to repeat the Bajaur incident, and not to demolish houses or impose fines without consultation with tribal elders.

12. (SBU) On 1/26, JUI-F Provincial Information Secretary Jalil Jaan and JUI-F Madrassah Director, Maulana Binoori invited Consulate officers to lunch where they stressed that the JUI-F's prominent role in recent anti-American protests in Peshawar should not "drown out" its ongoing efforts to work with the GOP to halt terrorism in the tribal areas. Both officials spotlighted Maulana Fazlur Rehman's outreach in Waziristan and noted the English-language press covered only the Maulana's anti-Bajaur statements. Both leaders added the Bajaur incident has yet to be "defused" as a public issue because key facts remain unclear and compensation unpaid, thereby fueling intense speculation. (Note: Key press contacts tell us the incident will soon be off the front page. End note.)

13. (C) Comment: We do not know if these JUI-F officials approached us in their personal capacities or under instruction from Maulana Fazlur Rehman. However, their reminder that the JUI-F continues to position itself as a bridge between the GOP and the tribal people, and pays lip service to anti-terrorism efforts, is consistent with the party's overall strategy. The pragmatic, flexible JUI-F has long tried to project itself as offering something to everyone. As they led anti-American protests here over the past few days, these same officials were undoubtedly planning to break bread with the U.S. Consulate to convey "their whole message." END COMMENT.

SPANGLER